



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
North Central Division

GREAT LAKES LEVELS UPDATE, NO. 14 4 SEPTEMBER 1986

Rainfall on the Great Lakes basin was again above average during the month of August and the lakes still brim with waters accumulated during more than a year of high supplies. At the risk of sounding like a cracked record, we must again note that new record high monthly levels for August were set on Lakes Michigan-Huron, St. Clair and Erie. For St. Clair, it has been a full year now that record monthly highs have been set and for Lakes Michigan-Huron, it was the eleventh month straight. The Lake Erie level has been less than its record monthly high only once, in April, since October 1985. While Lake Superior again did not set a new monthly record for August, it remains extremely high with an August 31st level of 601.81 feet. The attached bulletin shows that all the Great Lakes except Lake Ontario are predicted to remain extremely high through the end of February 1987. Riparian property owners should be alert to take necessary precautions in advance of the fall storm period.

The International Joint Commission (IJC) is continuing to direct the outflows for the two Great Lakes that are regulated. The Lake Superior outflow is at its specified Plan 1977 outflow setting, but the Lake Ontario outflow is being regulated under an emergency action, known as Criterion (k) and provided for in the IJC's Orders of Approval. The emergency action in August increased the outflow by more than 17,000 cfs which reduced the Lake Ontario level 0.25 foot below that level that would have occurred using the regulation plan outflows. The emergency action has been in effect throughout 1986 and has reduced the Lake Ontario level by about 2.3 feet. Without the emergency action, Lake Ontario would have broken its all-time record high level (248.06 feet) in May 1986. Shipping interests have been informed of the higher St. Lawrence River velocities and strong cross-currents created by the overdischarges dictated by the emergency action.

On August 1, 1986, the Governments of Canada and the United States issued a new Reference to the IJC for a comprehensive, multi-year study of methods to alleviate the adverse consequences of fluctuating Great Lakes water levels. The Governments asked for an interim report by one year after the study begins and for a final report by May 1, 1989.

A recent barge accident at the head of the Niagara River is having a small, adverse effect on the levels of Lakes Erie, St. Clair and Michigan-Huron. The barge, lodged against the center pier of the Peace Bridge, is impeding the flow of the river by 6,000-7,000 cubic feet per second. The owner of the barge is currently formulating a plan for its removal. If the owner cannot safely remove the barge, the Corps of Engineers will use an emergency authority to do the work.

The Corps of Engineers has authority under Public Law 84-99 to carry out preventive work prior to a flood threat to life and improved property. This program, known as Advance Measures, is applicable to areas threatened with inundation. There is no similar authority applicable to shore erosion threats. In Michigan, construction of five approved Advance Measures projects is now substantially complete: Luna Pier, Estral Beach, Detroit Beach in Frenchtown Township, and Labo Island and Milleman in Brownstown Township. A sixth project, the Grodi Road area in Erie Township, is under construction. A seventh project, the Village of Quanicassee in Tuscola County, was recently approved and is being

finalized for construction. Investigations continue as requests are received for consideration of new and previously denied projects. In Ohio, seven projects have been approved. Bayview is completed, Eastlake is under construction, and Wightmans Grove is being finalized for construction. The feasibility of the Oregon project is now questionable. The Reno Beach/Howard Farms, Whites Landings, and Crystal Rock projects are pending resolution of local sponsorship. All other potential projects in both states either are ineligible or have been declined by the communities. Investigation of potential Advance Measures continues in New York on Lakes Erie and Ontario as the result of a request from the Governor. Investigation of potential projects on the north side of Chicago in Illinois continues. In Wisconsin, the Governor has requested assistance and one project was investigated and denied.

The Corps is also authorized to assist local communities in responding to actual flooding situations. This includes providing technical assistance, supplies and equipment and contracting, as necessary, to supplement maximum state and local efforts. Requests for assistance should be directed through local and state disaster assistance agencies.

For Great Lakes basin technical assistance or information, please contact one of the following Corps of Engineers District Offices:

For New York, Penn. and Ohio
Colonel Daniel R. Clark
Commander, Buffalo District
1776 Niagara Street
Buffalo, NY 14207-3199
(716) 876-5454-Ext. 2201

For Mich., Minn. and Wisc.
Colonel Robert F. Harris
Commander, Detroit District
Post Office Box 1027
Detroit, MI 48231-1027
(313) 226-6440 or 226-6441


For Ill. and Indiana
LTC Frank R. Finch
Commander, Chicago District
219 S. Dearborn (6th Floor)
Chicago, IL 60604-1797
(312) 353-6400

The "Help Yourself" brochure which contains information on shoreland damage causes and some protective measures is available from the District Offices listed above or from this office: North Central Division, 536 South Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60605-1592, Telephone: (312) 353-6364.

The Corps is additionally charged with regulating work and construction of structures in the waters of the United States. Any work done along the Great Lakes shoreline requires a Corps permit as well as a State permit. There are numerous types of Corps authorizations which cover shore protection work. Shortened procedures for issuing the required authorizations as quickly as possible have been developed. Applicants for permits in New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio should contact the Buffalo District by Phone Number (716) 876-5454, Ext. 2315; in Michigan and Indiana, the Detroit District by Phone Number (313) 226-2218; in Illinois, the Chicago District by Phone Number (312) 353-6428; and in Wisconsin and Minnesota, contact the St. Paul District by Phone Number (612) 725-5819.

Near shore wave warnings are provided by various National Weather Service Offices for certain portions of the Great Lakes. Information can normally be heard on the National Weather Service's local weather radio broadcasts.

I will continue to issue these updates in an effort to keep you informed of the lake levels and the actions being taken to help alleviate the situations. These updates will accompany the monthly bulletin until the lakes return to safe levels.


JOSEPH PRATT
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding